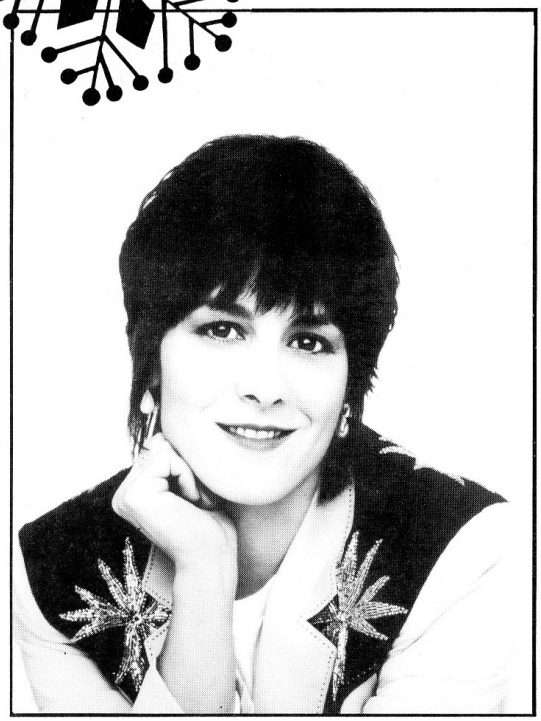
Thanks Steve!
Love
Michelle
Wright

THE WRIGHT STUFF

VOL. 1 NO. 1 DECEMBER 1990



Dear Friend,

Hello and welcome to my fan club! This is a very exciting time for me and I thank you for choosing to be a part of it. I'm on the road as I'm writing this letter. The boys in my band are playing cards and I'm patiently waiting my turn so I can "show them how it's done". (Being the only woman on this bus, I have to say things like that from time to time to try and keep "my boys" in line.)

Since signing my first international recording contract with ARISTA RECORDS in mid-1989, and releasing my debut Arista album earlier this year, we've been busy doing concerts throughout Canada and the United States. It's pretty obvious that I enjoy travelling since I've been on the road for the past nine years. I'm grateful that, through this fan club, I can share with you both my passion for music and all the exciting things that just might come to pass over the course of the next few years.

You know, my family is very important to me, so I take great pride in telling you that my cousin Debbie Malott will be operating the fan club. Cousin Deb has always believed in me and has been a tremendous support throughout the lean years. She is a lady with a great sense of humour, so feel free to make your letters entertaining (she has a unique laugh you'll probably hear one day in your part of the world) and we'll all have fun together.

Debbie will keep you informed about our tour schedule and we both look forward to meeting you soon. In the meantime, with Christmas just around the corner, I would like to send you all my love and prayers for your happiness.

Merry Christmas and have a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Michelle

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT - DEBBIE MALOTT

Dear Michelle Wright Fan,

This is it. The first issue of **THE WRIGHT STUFF** hot off the presses. I'm sorry it has taken so long to get this inaugural newsletter out to you but, as they say, a job worth doing is worth doing "WRIGHT" (Sorry, I couldn't resist)!

I'd like to introduce myself to you in hopes that we will be able to communicate more freely as friends over the coming years. I'm a para-legal, the mother of 2 daughters, the wife of a plumbing contractor, and I've been a die-hard Michelle Wright fan for almost as long as her mother. Oh, and I nearly forgot, I'm also Michelle's first cousin.

"Yep! I've got a cousin who can sing". That's what I've been telling people for years. I've talked about Michelle for so long that it only seems natural that I've become president of her fan club.

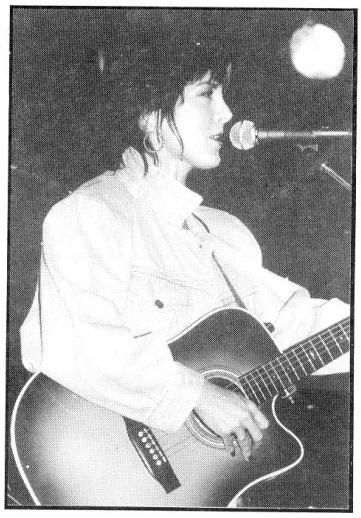
Michelle and I sincerely hope you enjoy this newsletter. Hopefully you will find it entertaining and informative, and that it keeps you abreast of all the fabulous news and events surrounding Michelle's life and career.

So, kick back, relax and get caught up on what's been happening with our Favourite Lady of Country Music - MICHELLE WRIGHT.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE UPDATE

In 1990, with the release of herself-titled debut album for Arista Records and her first two Arista singles, "New Kind of Love" and "Woman's Intuition", Michelle has seen her popularity grow across North America. With this recent wave of acceptance has come a great demand for personal appearances, leading to dates with such recording stars as Dan Seals, Garth Brooks, Ronnie Milsap and The Charlie Daniels Band, an appearance on the Arista show at Fan Fair in Nashville last June, a November 1990 tour of Southern Ontario with country music legends the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and a series of August dates in Texas with Arista labelmates Alan Jackson and Exile. Michelle and her band were especially busy in September and October on a six week tour of major American markets, including Washington, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Nashville, Fort Worth, Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Houston, Dallas, New Orleans, Austin and Minneapolis.

In addition to all of Michelle's concert appearances, this past year has seen her guesting on many major television programs. In September, Michelle was featured on the CBC airing of "George Fox's New Country" special. George specifically requested Michelle as a guest because he appreciates both her talent and her warm and genuine personality.



In August, Michelle taped the "Super Dave Show", for broadcast in 1991 on the Global Network in Canada and on Showtime in the United States. Michelle particularly enjoyed this appearance not only because she is a big fan of Super Dave Osborne and his zany stunts but also because the legendary Ray Charles was also featured on the show. "That's one of the biggest thrills for me being in this business", says Michelle. "I get to meet some of the greatest people and witness their incredible talents."

Other notable television appearances during the past few months: **Nashville Now** (TNN) with host Ralph Emery, **Crook and Chase** (TNN), **The Tommy Hunter Show** (CBC Canada and TNN), **Ronnie and the Browns** (CTV Canada), **The Joan Kennedy Show** (ATV Canada) and **The Shirley Show** (CTV Canada).

AND THE CANADIAN COUNTRY MUSIC ASSOCIATION'S 1990 FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR IS...

...MICHELLE WRIGHT!

The Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) awards show is a gala event which, in itself, creates a level of excitement difficult to top. Or so it seemed until the point in the Canadian Television Network (CTV) 1990 CCMA AWARDS SHOW telecast when Gary Fjellgaard and George Fox announced "THE 1990 FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR IS...MICHELLE WRIGHT". Anyone who witnessed this special moment in Michelle's life and career this past September will certainly agree that there was genuine surprise in the eyes of a very grateful winner receiving her first-ever CCMA award.

During her heartwarming acceptance speech, Michelle had to pause periodically to try and catch her breath she was so overwhelmed. Following the show, George Fox said that he didn't think Michelle was ever going to come up to accept her award because she seemed to be just sitting there for so long. Joel Kane, Michelle's partner in life and bass player in her band, said that when Michelle leaned over to give him a hug after the announcement, he had to tell her, "Well, go up and get it".

When asked what was going through her mind after she heard Gary and George announce her name, Michelle recalled: "I was really afraid of forgetting to thank someone, or tripping up the stairs to get to the podium". During a commercial break from the television broadcast, people from every vein of the country music industry offered their congratulations to Michelle. Here are just a few comments made to Michelle by her peers:

"I got goosebumps for you"...George Fox (1990 CCMA Male Vocalist of the Year).

"I'm very proud of you"...k.d. lang (1990 CCMA Entertainer of the Year).

"You've really worked hard for this"...Gary Fjellgaard (1990 CCMA Duo of the Year Winner with duet partner Linda Kidder).

"Congratulations, Michelle, I knew you could do it"...Leonard Rambeau (Personal Manager of Anne Murray and George Fox).

SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROAD...

Visiting new cities and meeting new people is always exciting but some days are more exciting than others!

During an April promotional visit to California in support of her single "New Kind of Love", Michelle was enjoying a leisurely bath in her hotel room in Oakland, when suddenly the towels started to dance away from the wall to the tune of a genuine "California Earthquake". After all was said and done the quake was given a rating of 5.4 on the Richter scale - it was easy to dance to and had a definite beat!

Looking back on the experience Michelle says, "California - a nice place to visit, but I don't think I'd want to live there."

And the emotional high continued for Michelle in the week immediately following the CCMA award show, as she received congratulatory flowers from many friends including George Fox, Anne Murray, and Monterey Artists, Michelle's American booking agency located in Nashville, Tennessee.

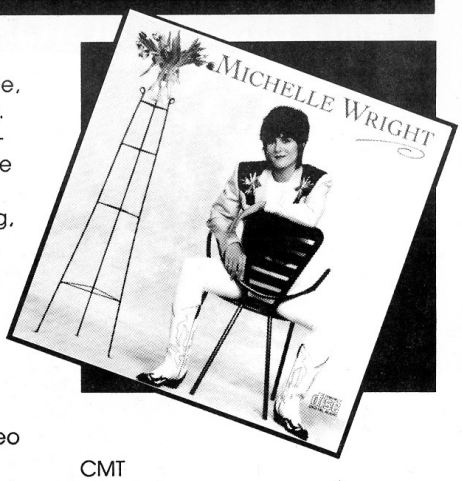
ON RECORD (AND ON VIDEO TOO)

Michelle has released two albums at this point in her career. Her 1988 debut independent album on Savannah Records, **DO RIGHT BY ME**, is available through the fan club. Order information can be found on the accompanying separate sheet.

Michelle's 1990 Arista Records debut, simply titled **MICHELLE WRIGHT**, should be easy to find at your favourite record store. But if you can't track down a copy, order it through your store or from the fan club. Just mention Catalogue Number AC-8627 (cassette) or ARCD-8627 (CD).

"A Heartbeat Away" is the title of Michelle's new Arista single, the third from her current album. Released in America on November 27, "A HeartbeatAway" is due out in Canada the first week of the new year. If you like the song, please call your local country radio station people and ask them to play it - your support can help make this single a hit!

You may have seen Michelle's video for "New Kind of Love". Well, there's a video for "A Heartbeat Away", too. If you want to see it, please request it by writing to the appropriate video channel:



CMT
704 18th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37203

TNN
2806 Opryland Drive
Nashville, TN 37214

MUCHMUSIC
299 Queen Street West
Toronto, ONT. M5V 2Z5

TOUR DATES - 1991

January 12-19	Caribbean Cruise (Regent Tours)
January 22	taping "The Spirit of The Country" for CJOH-TV, Ottawa ON
March 3	Juno Awards, Vancouver BC
March 9	Country Radio Seminar Nashville TN
June 1	Fairgrounds, Chatham ON
June 10-16	Fan Fair, Nashville TN
July 20	Eau Claire WI
August 1	Detroit Lakes MN

Tour dates are always subject to change. Please check them before-travelling any distance.

AND ONE FINAL NOTE ...

Well, that's it for this issue. I could have written a book the size of WAR AND PEACE about everything that has been happening in Michelle's life lately. However, this is the condensed version of a career that has new and exciting developments on a daily basis.

Of course, this newsletter is only going to be as good as the information provided, so please send along your suggestions, ideas, newspaper clippings, photographs and anything you think will be of interest to all of us.

Exciting times are ahead for Michelle and both she and I are happy that you will be a part of these times. Look for more news in the next issue of **THE WRIGHT STUFF**. Until then, I remain truly a friend to a friend, a cousin to a cousin and always just a heartbeat away!

Debbie Malott

Debbie Malott
President
MICHELLE WRIGHT INTERNATIONAL FAN CLUB
P.O. BOX 152, MORPETH, ONTARIO N0P 1X0

BIOGRAPHY

ARISTA RECORDS, INC
ARISTA BUILDING
6 WEST 57 STREET NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

MICHELLE WRIGHT

Talent, experience and fate have combined to bring the rich, soulful voice of Michelle Wright to the ears of the public, with a style she dubs "cruise music": an unprecedented blend of country with rhythm & blues. Experience has come slowly and been hard-won; fate has been a matter of being ready, rather than being lucky; and talent—she was born with that.

"Both my mother and father sang and played country music in Canada. I was born in Chatham, Ontario, but we were always travelling. My earliest memories of music are singing in the car . . . or spending the weekend with my father after my parents separated, and watching him put on a rhinestone-studded suit to perform in.

"While my parents were singing country, I was growing up across the Canadian border from Detroit. I was exposed to Motown music at an early age and became a great fan of Diana Ross and Otis Redding."

When Michelle was nine, her family settled in Merlin, Ontario, and by the time she was twelve, they had accumulated a garage full of musical equipment. "My stepfather was a grain farmer, so after putting in time on a tractor, my brother and I used to perform in the garage. In those days, he played guitar and I played drums."

Michelle began playing acoustic guitar when she was thirteen, playing locally at dances and weddings. She won an area talent search while still in high school. High school also fostered other skills which would serve Michelle in pursuit of a creative career.

"Merlin High School had only 120 students, but the school was highly academic and athletic. I wasn't as academic as I might have been, but I was enthusiastic about the athletics: volleyball, basketball, track and field—all of it. I'd have to say that high school is where I developed the competitive edge that I've applied to my music all these years. Through athletics I learned about discipline and training. I realized that if you really wanted something, you had to be serious about it."

It was around this time that fate began to intertwine with experience, propelling Wright in the direction of music as a livelihood. Her first job with a professional band came as the result of a phone call for her mother, who was away from home selling real estate. Michelle took the job herself. Later, during her first year of college, she was again performing with a local band in Chatham when she attracted the attention of an American booking agent, who asked her if she'd be interested in singing with a band on the road.

"At that time, I'd had absolutely no exposure to road bands. I'd been dating the same guy for seven years, and thought I was going to get married and have a farm. I explained to the agent that I was in college, I had my life planned . . . but I'd think about it.

"I thought about it for one week. Then I auditioned, got the job, and was gone for the whole summer. That was the end of my previous plans and the beginning of eight years on the road."

Michelle spent three years touring with bands across the United States and Canada before starting up her own band, and coming to the attention of Brian Ferriman, of Canada's Savannah Music.

"It was Brian who gave me direction, and an understanding of what you have to do to succeed in this business. I was already getting an education about what was involved in running my own band. Through my experiences, and Brian's wisdom, I began to see how important it is to surround yourself with the right kind of people, people who are willing to strive for excellence. Up until then, if I needed a band member, I took whoever was available."

A year later, Michelle's band was called at the last minute to replace a band who had cancelled a performance outside Ottawa. "The concert appeared to be a disaster. It was an outdoor festival and there wasn't a great turnout. But one member of the audience happened to be Rick Giles, a hit songwriter from Nashville. He heard me singing my last song as he was arriving at the festival, and before he had a chance to see me, he remarked to his wife, 'Good heavens, that guy has an interesting voice.' When he realized I was a woman, he said he just had to meet me—which he did."

Giles and his songwriting partner, Steve Bogard, brought Michelle to Nashville in January of 1986, where they began to work on songs for her to record. In February of 1986, Michelle won the CJBX-FM Country Roads Talent Contest in London, Ontario, which awarded her a cash prize. Michelle used the prize money to go into the studio and record her first three Giles/Bogard songs.

"Do you see what I mean by fate? Everything else was in place. I had experience, a band, a manager, and songwriters/producers—all I needed was the money, and there it was! Rick and Steve came to Toronto for the sessions, and have stayed deeply involved ever since."

Michelle's first single won her a nomination as Rising Star of 1986 in the Canadian Country Music Association. Her second single was a Canadian Top Fifteen hit, and she received a 1987 nomination as CCMA Vocalist of the Year. Her first Canadian album, *DO RIGHT BY ME*, was released in 1988, and yielded two Top Ten singles in 1988 and an Adult Contemporary crossover hit in 1989.

The year 1989 brought Michelle two nominations for Juno awards from the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS), and five nominations from the Canadian Country Music Association. The subscribers of *RPM Magazine* awarded her her first industry award, voting Michelle the Big Country Award as Canada's 1989 Top Country Female Vocalist. In the same month, she was chosen as the opening act for Randy Travis' tour of Western Canada.

And the fun was just beginning.

"Rick (Giles) had heard about Tim DuBois heading up a new country division of ARISTA RECORDS in Nashville. He presented a tape to Tim, who then came to Toronto to see me perform. When Tim came backstage to talk to me about a recording contract with ARISTA, I couldn't believe it. Tim asked me to phone him in Nashville the next day to talk further. But it took me an extra day to get up the nerve to call because I was afraid he might have changed his mind in the meantime."

In talking about Wright, Tim DuBois says, "Michelle possesses an extraordinary wealth of talent and energy that is evident in the studio and on the stage. She is truly a versatile vocalist with tremendous range. Everyone at Arista is very excited about bringing her special style and sound to the States."

Regarding her impending "coming to America", Michelle says, "I'm ready for this. I have a great band; a couple of years ago I auditioned 65 players to come up with the right combination of people who shared my vision and desire to make this happen. I've had my taste of the wild life, but I've gotten that out of my system—I take this seriously, it's business.

Co-producers Giles and Bogard are thrilled with the studio sessions for Michelle's first ARISTA album. "The songs for this project are lyrically true to Michelle's outlook on life," says Bogard. "They reflect her energy, her sense of purpose, and her commitment to succeed in spite of all obstacles." Says Giles, "Musically the material springs from traditional country and r&b roots, with a production emphasis on natural integrity and honesty. Everyone involved in the project seems to get caught up in the excitement and fire Michelle brings to country music."

"My music is an extension of me," says Michelle, "And right now I feel very strong. My dreams are coming true, and I feel I have something to contribute.

"What a way to make a living! I'll play music as long as I'm able."

With the Wright confidence and talent, it sounds like Michelle is in for a very long and successful run.

MICHELLE WRIGHT: FACTS

FULL NAME:	Michelle Wright
BORN:	Chatham, Ontario
RAISED:	Merlin, Ontario
RESIDES:	Toronto, Ontario
BIRTHDATE:	July 1,1961 (Canada Day)
MARITAL STATUS:	Single
HEIGHT/WEIGHT:	5'6"/125
HAIR/EYES:	Brown/Brown
INSTRUMENT:	Acoustic Guitar
FAMILY:	Mother: Monica Wright Father: Jack Martin Brother: Steve Martin Sister: Lori Wright
MEMORABLE PERFORMANCE:	Sang "Satin Sheets" with her mother and brother at her school in seventh grade
LEISURE:	"On my own time, I'm quite domestic. I like to redo rooms, paint and wallpaper. I knit, and sew . . . I make some of my own stagewear—it's my escape from the business. And I'm interested in fitness. Now that I have this thing rolling, I plan to make more time for working out, staying in shape."
EARLY INFLUENCES:	Merle Haggard, Wanda Jackson, Diana Ross, Otis Redding
CURRENT FAVORITES:	Merle Haggard, K.T. Oslin, k.d. lang, Anita Perras, Melissa Ethridge
NOMINATIONS:	Rising Star of 1986, Canadian Country Music Association 1987 Vocalist of the Year, CCMA Juno Award as 1989 Country Female Vocalist of the Year; Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS) Juno Award as 1989 Most Promising Female Vocalist (CARAS) 1989 Entertainer of the Year, CCMA 1989 Best Album, *DO RIGHT BY ME,* CCMA 1989 Female Vocalist of the Year, CCMA 1989 Best Single (2 nominations), CCMA —"Do Right By Me" —"I Wish I Were Only Lonely" 1990 Best Video, CCMA 1990 Fan Choice, Entertainer of the Year, CCMA
AWARDS:	1989 Big Country Award as Top Country Female Vocalist; *RPM Magazine* 1990 Female Vocalist of the Year, CCMA

MICHELLE WRIGHT

Hi Steve:

Thanks for joining the fan club. I get so much pleasure and encouragement from reading the letters that come in. I hope all is well and I look forward to seeing you sometime. Take care and be happy.

Love
Michelle
Wright

MICHELLE WRIGHT

SUITE 104, 5409 EGLINTON AVE. W.
ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO, CANADA M9C 5K6